Include Lists (APA)

The APA style guide discusses different ways of listing items or elements. See, below, for a tabular representation of its guidelines. The method you choose depends on the size of the chunk you are listing (i.e. a word, a phrase, a sentence, or a paragraph) and whether "ordinality" (e.g. "chronology, importance, priority") is suggested (American Psychological Association, 2020, 6.52, p. 190).

How To Include a List (APA) (American Psychological Association, 2020)			
Use just a colon (:)	**Use lowercase letters** (6.50, p. 189)	**Use Arabic numbers** (6.51, pp. 189–190)	**Use bullet points** (6.52, pp. 190–191)
For words or phrase	For "phrases"	For "complete sentences or paragraphs"	For "phrases," "complete sentences," or a combination of both
To just show separate items	To show "separate, parallel items in a complex list"	To show, for example, the "chronology, importance, [or] priority" of "items in a series"	To show items "in [a] series" but their order does not indicate "chronology, importance, [or] priority"
List within the existing sentence.	List within the existing sentence.	Introduce the numbers after a colon. Place a full stop after each number. Start each sentence with a capital letter and finish it with a full stop (or question mark, if needed).	**For phrases**: Introduce the list with a colon. Start a new line for each bullet point. Start each phrase with a lowercase letter. For end punctuation, either have nothing or place a comma after each phrase. Be consistent. **For sentences**: Introduce the list with a colon. Start a new line for each bullet point. Start each sentence with a capital letter and end it with a full stop. **For a combination**: This may be needed when listing definitions of terms. Place the term in bold, lowercase print followed by a colon. If a phrase comes next, start with a lowercase letter. If a sentence follows, start with a capital letter. End both the phrase and the sentence with a full stop.
See Example A	**See Example B**	**See Example C**	**See Example D**

Example A

Last year, Sheridan had students from: Australia, Bhutan, China, Columbia, Finland, Nepal, India, Indonesia, Scotland, and Venezuela.

Example B

Our recent PD Day consisted of: (a) a welcome, (b) a short devotion, (c) an update on research output, (d) some group work and discussion, and (e) a goal-setting session.

Example C

The following research questions will be investigated:

1. How many domestic students are studying a Bachelor of Business at Sheridan?
2. Why have these students selected this course?

Example D

Phrases:

My research goals for this semester are to:

- finish writing my current article
- search databases for literature related to the Dublin presentation
- further collegial discussions related to the Murdoch presentation

Sentences:

Academic literacy could be improved if:

- Lecturers explicitly taught writing genres in class.
- Students practised writing patterns outside of set assessments.

A Combination:

- **linguistics:** the scientific study of language.
- **Noam Chomsky:** He is most known for his linguistic theory of universal grammar.

More Punctuation Rules

For more information on the use of commas and semicolons, read the *Write Well* document "Punctuate (APA)," especially the section titled "Punctuating Lists." In case you were wondering, APA does use the Oxford comma (a comma before the "and" in a list of three or more items).

Check for Parallelism

It is important to reflect the same grammatical pattern when listing items or elements. This is called *parallelism*. For example, notice how all the bullet points in Example D (under "Phrases") begin with a verb. For more information on parallelism, see the *Write Well* materials titled "Maintain Coherence: Parallelism."

References

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Author.